



Energy Efficient Big Cypress Swamp Welcome Center

Transcript

We here at the Big Cypress National Preserve have gotten into the Green Revolution in a big way. Our brand new welcome center is our introduction into green design. And while we have been recycling and creating less waste for years, we were ready to make the next step. Let's take a look at our great new facility and some of its green aspects. Notice out manual doors, this helps to control our interior climate.

Inside the welcome center great care was taken in choosing paints, stains, and adhesives that give off low VOCs (volatile organic compounds), better known as harmful fumes. This makes us quite happy.

We also employ the use of several sky lights. This not only helps to cut our electrical use, but it also drenches the interior with natural light. Creating a much more natural look. But sometimes that natural light is not sufficient and we do have to supplement light, and when we do we try to use LED lights.

Our floors are made of stained concrete, which not only looks beautiful with its rich, red tones, but it also works as an insulator making the interior room temperatures much cooler. It's kind of like having a jacket on the building.

In the restroom area our toilets have an option for heavy or light flushes. Both are lower than normal flows, but it's nice to have the option. The sink is motion activated, reducing waste by turning off sooner. And instead of using those wasteful paper towels our hand dryer is also automatic. All of which helps to cut waste and electricity.

To combat long and hot days we use a smart climate control system.

We also try to control the climate outside with our breezeways. Which give us a shady area to stand and help cool the air by the doors. The same is true for our overhangs which cools the air by our windows.

The building itself is constructed with formed concrete panels, which are hollow giving support without the extra materials and weight.

You can see our garden is not only beautiful, but is planted with native drought resistant plants, creating a beautiful look that doesn't require much water.

Installation of our new solar panels is underway. Once online they will provide about 75% of our power, just about everything, except the air conditioning.

And lastly our boardwalk for wildlife viewing is made of post consumer recycled materials. Made out of plastic it has the look and feel of natural wood, except it's not. So come and see our site soon.